

## **8. WORLD WAR I OPENS GATEWAY FOR ZIONISM. AMAZING MALCOLM STORY OF SCHEME TO GET UNITED STATES INTO THAT WAR.**

One of the most revealing documents reflecting light upon the plan that largely produced the Balfour Declaration and helped get the United States into World War I rests quietly in the well guarded files of that great reliquary of historical records and exhibits known throughout the world as the British Museum.

The title of that document is "Origin of the Balfour Declaration — Dr. Weizmann's Contribution" and the author is the late Mr. James A. Malcolm who has been described by the late Mr. Wickham Steed, editor of the London Times, as "a prominent British-Armenian whose family had been British for several generations — a Balliol (Oxford) man who was a Government official with topmost contacts." Mr. Malcolm, several years after the war, prepared this typewritten account and filed it in the British Museum for posterity. We were granted the privilege of copying it in the Museum's copying room. The document explains why and how Malcolm had become interested in the Zionist cause and how it fell to his lot to start the negotiations that culminated in the Balfour Declaration — and incidentally in making the right contact with American Zionists to bring the United States into the picture.

In referring to his own background, he explains how his family of Armenian stock had settled in Persia long before Elizabethan days — and for at least two centuries had been engaged in shipping and in commerce generally. This meant

that they had long been identified with British interests in Persia and areas of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Their family agents in Baghdad had been the important David Sassoon who had originally hailed from Sasoun in Armenia and the Sassoons had once sought refuge in the Malcolm home from the hostile Pasha of Baghdad. "For many decades the Jews in Southern Persia always looked to our family for protection. We also sometimes acted as agents for Sir Moses Montefiore, who sent us money for distribution amongst the indigent members of the Jewish community. This was done by our cashiers who were all Jews and who had full charge of all the cash resources of our firm."

Later, as a boy, when he was sent to England for his education, Malcolm was placed under the guardianship of Sir Albert (Abdalla) Sassoon in London and this brought him into contact with many Jewish friends. Through these he heard about the projected Jewish settlements—then mentioned as probably in Palestine, El Arish, Argentina or Kenya. "Of course," he writes, "I had read Byron, George Eliot and Oliphant about the Jews." His father, Malcolm explains, had told him that Jews, wherever they were, never failed at Passover to drink to "next year in the land of Israel."

At some length Mr. Malcolm relates his many official contacts and appointments which are of no special interest here other than to distinguish him as a man of wide acquaintanceship and high official standing—a man of genuine importance in British circles. Prior to World War I he had become acquainted with some of the most active political Zionists and seemed to understand well the potential force of that movement which held considerable of his sympathy.

Among his high British official friends was Sir Mark Sykes who, at the time in question, was Assistant-Secretary to the British War Office—and who also was a wide-range liaison man among numerous high British officials who had important obligations in the war effort. For some time Sir Mark had been trying to make contact with an influential consensus of German-American opinion in the United States to determine its vulnerability and potential usefulness in

bringing America into the war on the side of Britain against Germany.

"During one of my visits to the War Cabinet Office in Whitehall Gardens," writes Mr. Malcolm, "in the late autumn of 1916, I found Sir Mark Sykes less buoyant than usual. As I had known his family of old and our relations were unrestrained, I enquired what was troubling him. He spoke of military deadlock in France, the growing menace of submarine warfare, the unsatisfactory situation which was developing in Russia and the general bleak outlook."

### **BRITISH EAGER FOR AMERICAN INTERVENTION**

Malcolm, in his written report, tells how the British Cabinet was anxiously seeking and hoping for United States intervention. He asked Sir Mark what progress on this was being made and the reply was "Precious little." Sir Mark told him that he had thought of enlisting the substantial Jewish influence in the United States but had been unable to do so since reports revealed "a very pro-German tendency among the wealthy American Jewish bankers and bond issuing houses (nearly all of German origin) and among Jewish journalists who took their cue from them."

Sir Mark told him that two missions which had been sent to the United States from France and Italy had both failed to make any headway and he was quite puzzled and disappointed. It seemed that the Jewish indifference was largely caused by their bitterness toward Czarist Russia. Malcolm states that he asked Sir Mark what efforts had been made to win over the Jews in America and he answered that the main argument had been that the Allies would eventually win and it would be better to be with the winning side.

"You are going the wrong way about it," Malcolm told him. "The well-to-do English Jews you meet and the Jewish clergy are not the real leaders of the Jewish people. You have overlooked what the call of nationality means. Do you know of the Zionist Movement?" Sir Mark admitted ignorance and Malcolm says he explained its nature and possibilities to him and emphasized his argument by adding — "You

can win the sympathy of the Jews everywhere, in one way only, and that way is by offering to try to secure Palestine for them.

"Sir Mark was taken aback and confessed that what I had told him was something quite new and impressive. He would talk to me again about it." A few days later the subject came up again and Sir Mark said it was most intriguing but that there were stumbling blocks which he did not explain; but Malcolm says he learned later about the existing Sykes-Picot treaty with France and Russia. This, incidentally, was a secret agreement that had previously been executed by Sir Mark Sykes and M. Picot of France whereby Turkish territories in the Middle East were, after the war, to be divided into three zones of influence — British, French and Russian. Palestine was to be divided between France and Britain. The Jews had not been mentioned at all and clearly were not intended to be beneficiaries in any way. More particularly the treaty was being kept secret from the more involved Arabs.

Not knowing about this treaty at the time, Malcolm suggested to Sir Mark that he discuss his proposal to build up a promise of Jewish nationalism in order to get their cooperation in influencing America into the war. Sir Mark promised to talk it over with Lord Milner, an influential member of the War Cabinet. Later he reported to Malcolm that he had discussed the matter with Lord Milner and that he in turn was greatly interested in the idea — but did not see how it would be possible to promise Palestine to the Jews.

Malcolm then pointed out what seemed to him the only way to achieve the desired result and in doing so explained that "one of President Wilson's most intimate friends, for whose humanitarian views he had the greatest respect, was Justice Brandeis, of the Supreme Court, who was a convinced Zionist."

### **ZIONIST ANGLE AROUSES INTEREST**

Sir Mark was extremely interested in this new aspect presented to him by Malcolm and promised to check into it further. Later he told Malcolm that he could see no possi-

bility of the Cabinet adopting it. When asked why not, Sir Mark explained that Britain could not act without the consent of her allies and he was sure they would not go along with the proposal. (In the background as hindrance, of course, was the secret Sykes-Picot treaty.)

Malcolm writes — "I then suggested that if the object was to secure United States help, surely the Allies would agree if he could obtain from the War Cabinet an assurance that help would be given toward securing Palestine for the Jews. It was certain that Jews in all neutral countries, especially the United States, would become pro-British and pro-Ally." Sir Mark then promised to put the question to Lord Milner again and in about a week Sir Mark reported back to Malcolm that Milner had talked with his colleagues again and the idea pleased them. They suggested that, without committing themselves, Malcolm open negotiations with the Zionist leaders. Malcolm protested that he could not go to these leaders empty handed but would be willing to do so if he could be sufficiently sure of the Cabinet's intentions to be able to say to the Zionists — "If you help the Allies, you will have the support of the British in securing Palestine for the Jews.

"This appealed to Sir Mark as eminently reasonable but he saw difficulties. France would have to be persuaded to support the idea of Palestine for the Jews. Then there was the Vatican (Sir Mark himself was a Catholic) which would oppose my scheme which meant placing the Christian Holy Places under Jewish control. I replied that these difficulties must be overcome if the Allies wanted the help of the United States."

Sir Mark then raised the question of how some Jews were apathetic as to Palestine and others were actually opposed to it. To this objection Malcolm replied: "That is because you have not met the other kind of Jews, who are remarkable types and intensely interested in the idea of Zion. There are tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of such Jews. The wealthy Jewish bankers of London are completely out of touch with them." Sir Mark agreed to put this suggestion to the Cabinet and "a day or two later"

he reported back that the Cabinet had agreed to his suggestion and "authorized me to open negotiations with the Zionists."

"Remembering my conversations with L. J. Greenberg, Editor of the 'Jewish Chronicle,' I wrote him at once. I told him that from information in my possession I was sure the time had arrived when Jewry should cease 'sitting on the fence' and come down definitely to the side of the Allies and use all their influence especially in the U.S.A. to secure an Allied victory. The Jews wanted Palestine and now was the chance to get it. Such an opportunity would hardly recur and it was the duty of every Zionist to act quickly. I concluded by asking him if he could enable me to meet the leaders of the Zionist Movement. Greenberg replied in an enthusiastic letter, inviting me for a discussion."

### **ZIONISTS SEE BIG FUTURE OPENING**

After Malcolm told Greenberg of the situation and the favorable prospects, Greenberg offered to arrange a meeting for him (Malcolm) with Dr. Weizmann. The meeting was arranged at Weizmann's home in Addison Road. At this meeting present with Weizmann were his closest associate, Nahum Sokolow, and a few other Zionist leaders. Weizmann, a chemist, was at the time working in London on explosives for the Admiralty. Weizmann was keenly interested and asked when he could meet Sir Mark Sykes. Malcolm called Sykes from Weizmann's home and an appointment was arranged for the very next day — Sunday.

For some reason Weizmann was unable to attend that first meeting but Sokolow, Greenberg and other Zionists were present and after this and other meetings the Zionists were satisfied that the British promise was reliable. "The first step," writes Mr. Malcolm, "was to inform Zionist leaders in all parts of the world of the compact and Sir Mark said they would be given immediate facilities for cables to be sent through the Foreign Office and War Office, through the British Embassies and Consulates. A special detailed message was at once sent to Justice Brandeis in cipher through the Foreign Office. Further talks were held in various Gov-

ernment departments, at which Dr. Weizmann was present. All of these conversations took place with the knowledge and approval of Sir Maurice (now Lord) Hankey, Secretary of the Cabinet."

Out of these talks, Malcolm explains, there came a general understanding which he called a "Gentlemen's Agreement" to the effect that "the Zionists should work for active Jewish sympathy and support for the Allied cause, especially in the United States, so as to bring about a radical pro-Allied tendency in that country and that the British Cabinet would help the Jews to gain Palestine for this. The negotiations were now carried on in Sir Mark's room at the Foreign Office to which the matter was referred to the War Cabinet for action."

A new movement had entered the war. Jews everywhere were pressured with emotional propaganda based upon the implied promise they were to get Palestine. Malcolm relates one case of a group of Jews in Persia who were at the point of embracing Islam (Moslem faith) and quickly changed their minds because of this promise. The Zionist Movement was being stimulated and organized in all Jewish quarters.

Britain, confronted with the exigencies of war, was now playing with two hot potatoes—conflicting promises to the Arabs on one hand and to the Zionists on the other. Sir Mark, worried about this, asked Malcolm to give the Arabs a hint of the new Zionist strategy. Accordingly he had an interview with General Haddad Pasha, the London representative of the then Arab leader Sherif Hussein. Other high Arab officers were also present. They were not pleased with the inkling Malcolm gave them. "They did not want Jews to go to Palestine, which was an Arab land," comments Malcolm. They did not, of course, realize that this was to mean a mass immigration with a final take-over, and gradually accepted with some reluctance the picture Malcolm painted of the importance of having United States' participation.

#### **FRENCH JEWS WERE ANTI-ZIONIST THEN**

During the period of developing this new phase of the war, much back-room conference work was necessary to

conciliate and break down resistance. The bothersome Sykes-Picot treaty still hung over the "Palestine promise" to the Zionists. Under this treaty Britain and France were to divide Palestine. "All the leading Jews in France," writes Malcolm, "were anti-Zionists and scoffed at the idea that any appreciable number of Jews would ever want to go and settle in Palestine. Picot was told by them that Zionism was only an idealistic obsession of a few Eastern European Jewish fanatical nationalists who themselves would never go to Palestine." Malcolm explains that it took a great deal of cogent argument which he "happened to have" to get any cooperation from the French Jews. Malcolm went to Paris and had conferences in an attempt to mollify and convince the leaders—but there were strong anti-Zionist French Jews like Professor Sylvain Levi who made the French situation difficult.

In December of 1916, Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, who had not been favorable to the Zionist deal, resigned and Lloyd George became Premier. "This change was beneficial to the Zionist cause inasmuch as Asquith had been definitely unsympathetic whereas Lloyd George . . . was naturally predisposed to understand the Zionist Movement," writes Malcolm. "Sir Mark Sykes and I," he continues, "were greatly helped in gaining his support by Philip Kerr (later Lord Lothian), who was Lloyd George's Secretary and whose guidance in such matters he generally followed."

In the earlier days of the Zionist-Palestine plan there was a great deal of opposition from substantial Jewish citizens in England, but the main stumbling block in this early stage seemed to be the Jewish opposition in France where Malcolm had been using his best charm and argument—and without much effect. It was decided by the British Foreign Office, he recorded, that he should accompany the top Zionist official at that time (Nahum Sokolow) to Paris to insure his getting an audience with officials at the Quai d'Orsay. The conference was finally arranged in Paris but the important Jewish organization (Alliance Israelite) had caught wind of the brewing plan and tried unsuccessfully to prevent it.



From the Paris conference Sokolow went on to Rome with Malcolm, seeing that he took with him "the indispensable frock coat and silk hat." There he got assurance from the Pope that the Vatican and the Jews would be good neighbors in Palestine. Sykes and Malcolm made elaborate arrangements for other important prestige meetings in the process of lining up this deal which promised to Jewry (especially the Jews in the United States) that if they helped to bring America in and created a sufficient world pressure group they could have Palestine. "All of these steps were taken," writes Malcolm, "with the full knowledge and approval of (U.S.) Justice Brandeis, between whom and Dr. Weizmann there was an active interchange of cables."

### **STRATEGY WORKS—AMERICA ENTERS**

"The work was making satisfactory progress in the spring of 1917" — the United States at that time entered the war. Sir Mark, says Malcolm, was very confident that the Government's promise to the Zionists would be publicly confirmed at an early date. This, however, did not happen. During 1917 there were serious setbacks for the Allies in the war and there were other problems. One of these, Malcolm learned, was that a member of the British Cabinet "was working with all his might to prevent the promise being (officially) given" — and that man was an important Jew in British affairs — Edwin Montagu, Secretary for India and the son of Lord Swaythling (the banker). Further opposition was coming from the Jews of France where "nearly all the leading Jews, with the exception of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, were bitterly opposed to the pro-Zionist declaration of M. Pichon." One reason for this was that the French Jews — largely prominent and well assimilated — feared that a Jewish "homeland" in Palestine would affect their political status in France.

More opposition came in the action of a group of substantial Jews in England headed by Claude Montefiore (President of the Anglo-Jewish Association) and David Alexander, K.C. (President of the Board of Deputies) who, "acting through" Lucien Wolf of the Conjoint Foreign Committee,

published a long statement in the London Times "protesting against the reported intention of the Government to adopt a pro-Zionist policy in regard to Palestine."

This was quickly answered by the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, Dr. Hertz, and was followed with a pro-Zionist editorial written by Wickham Steed, editor of the Times, who, like Lloyd George and A. J. Balfour, had apparently become persuaded that the Zionist angle had power in America. The Zionists obviously had found the "golden key." The fight between the two factions over the Zionist question continued heatedly for some time with the pro-Zionists organizing to put pressure and persuasion on members of the Board of Deputies and other important British leaders.

The Palestine "announcement" by the British, which the Zionists had expected, was not readily forthcoming, causing much Zionist anxiety. The Government was deeply involved in other compelling matters—and greatly concerned by the rising opposition to Zionism's demands. The Zionists had not been idle—and had won over more British leaders through the belief of their apparent influence in America. The War Cabinet, before taking any action, decided to poll various leaders in an effort to get a summary of Jewish opinion to serve as justification—and perhaps vindication—for their contemplated act. Accordingly an enquiry was sent to eight interested and prominent Jews. They were—Leonard L. Cohen, Claude Montefiore, Sir Stuart Samuel (brother of Lord Samuel), Sir Philip Magnus, Lord Rothschild, N. Sokolow, Dr. Weizmann and the chief Rabbi, Dr. Hertz. Three of these (Cohen, Montefiore and Magnus) "replied strongly opposing the proposed statement." Sir Stuart Samuel was neither strongly hostile nor enthusiastic. The most compelling and favorable answer came from the chief Rabbi whose ecclesiastical authority had weight with the War Cabinet. He assured the members that "the proposed declaration would be hailed with enthusiasm by the vast majority of the Jewish people in the British Empire." Apparently no effort was made to get sentiment of the non-Jewish population of the British people.

## **ZIONISTS PAID WITH BALFOUR DECLARATION**

This was the strange final rite or ceremony that preceded the birth of the fantastic Balfour Declaration — a document that within forty years was destined to be the major cause of Middle East discord, warfare and peoples' dislocation. It set this area up as a probable time-bomb for another world war. Ironically, it marked the beginning of the end for Britain in the Middle East.

"The original draft of the (Balfour) Declaration," says Mr. Malcolm, "was prepared by Dr. Weizmann and his friends in London in the summer of 1917 at the instance of Sir Mark Sykes, and read (after various amendments at the instance of the anti-Zionists) as follows:

"His Majesty's Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish Race, and will use its best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object; it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed in any other country by such Jews who are fully contented with their existing nationality and citizenship."

This draft, explains Mr. Malcolm, "was cabled by Sir Ronald Graham to Brandeis in Washington for submission to President Wilson and to secure his concurrence. Baron Edmond de Rothschild also agreed to it and it was then submitted to the War Cabinet and to Mr. Balfour who would have to sign it as Foreign Secretary." So we see that the "Balfour Declaration" was not Balfour's declaration at all — except that it was submitted to him for signature. So goes the world.

Mr. Malcolm, in his filed report, explains that after the document was sent to Justice Brandeis and his Jewish colleagues in America, it underwent further amendments. The word "people," for instance, was substituted for the word "race" and the last sentence was changed to omit the "fully contented" phrasing.

As indicated in Chapter IX, a book called "The Great Betrayal" by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise and Jacob de Haas contains a paragraph which reads —

"The final draft of what became known as the Balfour Declaration was amended by the authors of this book. After consultation with Justice Bran-

deis it was submitted to Colonel House who transmitted this version to President Wilson upon whose agreement and express authority the final text was issued by the British War Cabinet."

## **ALL WAS NOT GOLD THAT GLITTERED**

Consequently the Balfour Declaration, as finally signed and published with much acclaim, read as follows:

Foreign Office,

November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country"

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

*Y. W.*  
*Arthur Balfour*

The closing paragraph must appear somewhat ludicrous in view of the fact that the top Jewish-Zionist leaders knew all about this—in fact had been at work for a long time trying to get it—and finally they actually wrote it.

It was toward the end of October, 1917, that Sir Mark Sykes reported to Mr. Malcolm that the War Cabinet, in view of military progress, was about to give consideration to the "Declaration" as to approval. The day that was to happen Sir Mark asked Malcolm to wait for him in the vestibule of the War Cabinet and arranged a code word to let him know the result. As Sykes came out of the conference he called to Malcolm "It's a boy," which indicated approval. "I knew then," writes Mr. Malcolm, "that at last, after many anxious weeks and months, my seed had borne fruit and that the Government had become an ally of Zionism." He adds that it was strictly correct for Professor Temperley, official historian of the Paris Peace Conference, to describe the Balfour Declaration as "a definite contract between Great Britain and Jewry." (The word "Jewry" is objectionable to some Jews when it is used by the Zionists as all-inclusive.)

The work of achieving the Balfour Declaration by the Zionists was described by Mr. Malcolm. "Our method of operation from the outset," says Malcolm, "had been the following. Once the Government had decided to adopt the pattern of pro-Zionist policy, it became necessary to pick up the various strands to be woven in to the pattern. Of these the most important was the work of enlightenment regarding Zionist aims, on which Dr. Weizmann had been concentrating since the outbreak of the War. Through the good offices of the late C. P. Scott, Editor of the "Manchester Guardian," and the late Professor Samuel Alexander of Manchester University, Dr. Weizmann had, over a period of years, interested in the movement Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Balfour . . ." Here follows a list of several other important people.

"Books, pamphlets and articles were written and published by a small group of Dr. Weizmann's disciples and friends . . ." and here again Malcolm lists a number of names, among whom he mentions especially the late Herbert Sidebotham, military correspondent of the Manchester Guardian and The Times, and also a correspondent for the London Observer under the name of "Scrutator." Then there

was the weekly publication "Palestine," published by the "British Palestine Committee" established in Manchester at the suggestion of Dr. Weizmann. Mr. Malcolm gave further details of the extensive and feverish program of propaganda and activity by the Zionists and the pro-Zionists to accomplish what has been recorded in this chapter.

He closed his written account by saying — "When I look back on that strenuous struggle I feel happy indeed that a kind Providence gave me the opportunity to place all my personal and official connections freely and fully at the disposal of my Zionist friends. Thus I was able to be of some service to the Jewish people at a great historic moment. In so doing I knew I was acting in the best interest of Britain and for the good of the world.

"Although in a letter to me Dr. Weizmann has recognized my initiative in this work, I think it only fair to state that without his dynamic and persuasive personality, and without his quick and courageous decisions behind the scenes and the important secret and hazardous missions he successfully undertook, we might not have succeeded at all." Malcolm adds more to his eulogy of Weizmann whom he seemed to idolize as some sort of a Messiah.

There were millions of Americans who never knew of these machinations to get the United States and its resources into a war that gave birth to Bolshevik Communism — and set in motion world revolutionary activity that has steadily developed to produce a cascade of successive crises throughout all the world. The full significance of this particular chapter may be better understood when other chapters are read and weighed along with it — particularly the chapter that follows, which examines and documents the machinations which culminated in the Zionist coveted Balfour Declaration.